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AFRICAN HOUSEHOLD SURVEY CAPABILITY PROGRAMME (AHSCP)
PROGRAMME OF WORK (1984-1989)

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Introduction

1. As has been stated at previous meetings, the African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP) which is the regional variant of the National Household Survey Capability Programme consists of three parts: country projects, the regional component and training projects some of which are sometimes included in the regional component but most are generally treated as separate entities.

Regional Component of AHSCP

2. The work programme which is outlined in this paragraph relates to the regional component. The other two components are discussed later. The following is the work programme which has already been approved by the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers but which can still be modified as far as the period 1986-1989 is concerned.

a. Advisory services to member States, on request, in the following areas:

(i) Preparation of survey programme documents for countries requiring technical and financial assistance in the context of the global National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) (two additional countries per year 1984-1989);

(ii) Establishment of active survey operations (two per year 1984-1989);

(iii) Training and development of staff resources needed in establishing effective survey programmes (four per year 1984-1989);

b. Development of methodology for the collection, processing, analysis and utilization of integrated demographic, social and economic data already begun will be continued, taking into account technical studies being undertaken by the UN Statistical Office and UN specialized agencies. Specifically the following will be done:

(i) Preparation of guidelines for the measurement of employment, under-employment and unemployment after the current testing of technical plans for labour force surveys in a number of African countries including Botswana and Malawi is completed;

(ii) Further development of technical plans for income, consumption and expenditure surveys, taking into account the special conditions of Africa and the need to make such surveys cost effective;

(iii) Examination of technical problems associated with agricultural surveys;

(iv) Further development of guidelines on report writing and dissemination of data after critical examination of reports produced under the AHSCP;

(v) Examination of sampling problems relating to construction of sampling frames in, and master samples for, integrated surveys and preparation of relevant guidelines;

(vi) Continued development of illustrative questionnaires, adaptation of concepts, definitions and classifications and preparation of relevant illustrative tabulation programmes;

(vii) Preparation of further guidelines on household data applications and analysis;

(viii) Preparation of guidelines on data processing procedures for the support of survey programmes, including the formulation of appropriate guidelines for data base activities.

c. In collaboration with the Central Co-ordinating Unit (CCU) of the UN Statistical Office and the UN specialized agencies, the regional team will assist in the mobilization of technical and financial resources for the implementation of national programmes.

d. Training workshops/seminars on organization, content and methodology of household surveys (1987, 1989).

e. Training of survey personnel of all levels in collaboration with the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA). This will involve the organization of training workshops at STPA and other centres and will be done in collaboration with the UN Statistical Office, the UN specialized agencies, the associate centres of STPA and multilateral as well as bilateral donors. The training activities will cover inclusion of survey techniques in training at under-graduate and similar levels; in-service training at national level and assistance in the organization of exchange visits.

3. The above regional programme as already stated is a summary of decisions taken at previous meetings held in connection with the AHSCP. It should be noted that ECA considers the first output in the work programme namely advisory services to countries as its first priority. Other activities, which like the first, are carried out in collaboration with the Central Co-ordinating Unit (CCU) of the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) of the UN Statistical Office and the Statistics Divisions of the relevant specialized agencies are aimed at providing documentation in lieu of or in addition to the advisory services to strengthen the capability of the African countries to carry out household surveys.

Country projects

4. As already noted in the Progress Report on the AHSCP (E/ECA/SM/13), 17 African countries are participating in the AHSCP. Project proposals will be formulated in respect of Burundi in the fourth quarter of this year.

5. It should be noted that additional requests for formulation of country projects have been received. However for the period 1982-83 the Programme Co-ordinator of the NHSCP and ECA decided that it will be more convenient to make the survey programmes of the 17 countries which had already enrolled in the AHSCP operational before enrolling other African countries. During the same period formal and informal requests were received from Ghana, Nigeria and Ivory Coast to be enrolled in the AHSCP. For Nigeria there is already a programme of household surveys and a joint mission from the UNSO, ECA and possibly FAO would be required, mainly to assist in improving the survey programme and putting it on a sound footing.

6. Commonwealth countries participating in this meeting which have not yet enrolled in the AHSCP may wish to outline their reactions to the proposal that in the period 1984-85 not more than 3 additional countries should be enrolled in the AHSCP. In this case it should be noted that Mauritius, like Nigeria, carries out surveys but these are done on an ad hoc basis and so far Mauritius has declined to be formally enrolled in the AHSCP though it has indicated that it would upon request originating from the Government welcome missions to deal with specific problems in their surveys. Uganda under the general project UGA/79/011 (Assistance to Economic Planning) is also planning a household budget survey in 1985. A request is also to be submitted to UNFPA for a demographic survey in 1986. These ad hoc surveys could be better implemented within the framework of an integrated survey programme.

Training

7. A number of training workshops have been held on the AHSCP with or without the collaboration of the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA). Unfortunately due to lack of resources working group meetings were held only in 1979 and 1981 and a seminar in 1981. There is no plan at present to hold specialized workshops on a specific topic such as sampling or labour force surveys. It should be noted however that other institutions like Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (INSEE) in association with the International Association of Survey Statisticians (IASS) have realized the need for intensive workshops and have held a workshop on household surveys in Dakar in 1981 and another on surveys of the informal sector is planned for October 1984. Both workshops were limited to French-speaking African countries. A proposal is also under consideration by the IASS Workshop Committee to bring together young survey statisticians with their problems to a central place so that experienced survey practitioners can help them in solving them. If such a proposal is generally acceptable, a workshop can precede the 45th Session of the International Statistical Institute due to be held in Amsterdam, Netherlands, 12-22 August 1985.

Conclusion

8. Most of the programme outlined above can only be implemented if ECA is able to maintain the present staff of 2 UNDP household specialists and 1 ILO household specialist and in addition gets the promised data processing adviser from the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Chief of the Statistics Division and the Chief, Censuses and Surveys Advisory Service will continue to provide significant inputs to enable the AHSCP to be implemented satisfactorily.